



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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## **CHURCHILL DOWNS CONCLUDES SPRING MEET WITH 53.3% INCREASE IN WAGERING**

**LOUISVILLE, Ky. (Thursday, July 2, 2020)** – All-sources wagering on Churchill Downs’ abbreviated 27-date Spring Meet totaled \$240.5 million, which was a 53.3% increase from the 32 days of racing that followed last year’s Kentucky Derby. Additionally, the average daily handle was up 81.7% from \$4.9 million one year ago to \$8.9 million this season.

The 146<sup>th</sup> Spring Meet, which was delayed and shortened to seven weeks from May 16-June 28, was staged under strict government-sanctioned protocols and without spectators for the first time in track history because of the COVID-19 pandemic. With no guests in attendance, many bettors were able to watch the racing action on FOX Sports’ “America’s Day at the Races,” which aired nationally every race day in high definition on either FS1 or FS2 through a partnership with FOX Sports and the New York Racing Association Inc. (NYRA).

Wagers on Churchill Downs’ racing product were placed almost exclusively online via advance deposit wagering outlets, led by TwinSpires.com – the official advance-deposit wagering service for Churchill Downs Incorporated, its family of racetracks and the Kentucky Derby.

Churchill Downs experienced four of the track’s six largest non-Derby, Oaks or Breeders’ Cup betting days in track history, led by a record \$19.3 million on May 23 (Stephen Foster Preview Day). Other big days were \$16.8 million on May 30 (Winning Colors/Old Forester Mint Julep); \$14.3 million on May 16 (Opening Day); and \$13.8 million on June 27 (Stephen Foster Day).

“In the midst of an unprecedented pandemic, we can’t thank our horsemen and horseplayers enough for their continued support and enthusiastic response throughout the Spring Meet,” said Churchill Downs Racetrack President **Kevin Flanery**. “Our team worked tirelessly with public health officials and our horsemen navigated through uncharted territory to deliver an important economic driver in a safe environment for thousands of individuals in the Commonwealth. I couldn’t be more proud of our staff and everyone who made the season possible. It was, however, an incredibly unusual season without fans in the stands, and they were greatly missed. We very much look forward to welcoming them back to Churchill Downs for Kentucky Derby Week in September.”

A total of 2,536 horses made starts in the 268 races for a substantial average of 9.5 horses per race – up from 8.4 horses in 2019.

Purses paid to horsemen totaled \$15.6 million and averaged \$576,000 per day compared to last year’s \$601,000 daily average. The average purse per race was \$58,000 compared to last season’s \$63,000.

Some of the sport’s brightest equine stars shined at Churchill Downs during the Spring Meet, led by **Midnight Bisou** (21-13-5-3—\$7,371,520) and **Tom’s d’Etat** (18-11-2-1—\$1,627,272), the top two-ranked horses on the June 29 National Thoroughbred Racing Association (NTRA) Top Thoroughbred Poll.

On June 27, Midnight Bisou, the 2019 Champion Older Dirt Female, powered home to an easy 8 ¼-length win in the \$200,000 Fleur de Lis presented by Coca-Cola (Grade II). One race later, Tom’s d’Etat delivered a brilliant performance in the \$500,000 Stephen Foster presented by Coca-Cola (Grade II) as the 7-year-old horse collected his fourth consecutive stakes win while clocking 1 1/8 miles in 1:47.30 – just .02 off Victory Gallop’s 1999 track and stakes record.

Both Tom's d'Etat and Midnight Bisou earned spots in the Breeders' Cup Classic and Distaff, respectively, at Keeneland on Nov. 7.

Other top horses who won stakes during the meet included \$100,000 Aristides winner **Volatile** (5-4-1-0—\$203,540), who emerged as a top contender for this fall's Breeders' Cup Sprint (GI); \$100,000 Louisville (GIII) winner **Admission Office** (14-4-5-2—\$432,957); \$100,000 Blame winner **Owendale** (16-6-2-2—\$1,143,735); \$200,000 Wise Dan (GII) winner **Factor This** (29-10-3-4—\$844,070); 2019 Breeders' Futurity (GI) winner **Maxfield** (3-3-0-0—\$442,762), who won the \$150,000 Matt Winn (GIII); 2019 Alabama (GI) winner **Dunbar Road** (8-5-1-1—\$758,040), who won the \$100,000 Shawnee; and 2019 Breeders' Cup Juvenile Fillies Turf (GI) winner **Sharing** (6-4-1-1—\$856,471), who won the \$100,000 Tepin in advance of running second in the Group 1 Coronation at Royal Ascot.

Allowance winners during the season included 2018 Champion 3-Year-Old Filly and Longines Kentucky Oaks (GI) winner **Monomoy Girl** (12-10-2-0—\$3,008,618) and 2019 Acorn (GI) and Coaching Club American Oaks (GI) winner **Guarana** (5-4-1-0—\$928,268).

Eleven horses won multiple races at the meet, including \$100,000 Dogwood (GIII) winner **Four Graces** (4-3-0-0—\$134,450); promising 2-year-old and Bashford Manor (GIII) winner **Cazadero** (2-2-0-0—\$106,160); turf sprinter **Change of Control** (17-5-4-2—\$295,849); improving 3-year-old **Art Collector** (7-3-1-0—\$188,475); and rising 3-year-old filly **Paris Lights** (3-2-0-1—\$95,412).

Hall of Fame trainer **Steve Asmussen** (100-17-11-10—\$1,112,065) not only won his record-extending 23<sup>rd</sup> Churchill Downs training title, 17 wins to 16 over **Brad Cox** (69-16-8-6—\$777,195), but he overtook south Louisville native **Dale Romans** (44-7-6-3—\$239,159) as the track's all-time leading trainer. Asmussen has won 747 career races at Churchill Downs, three more than Romans, who overtook renowned **Bill Mott** (42-8-4-4—\$481,140) on Nov. 12, 2017 after a 31-year reign.

Mott, who has 728 career wins at Churchill Downs, became only the seventh trainer in history to record 5,000 career wins when **Moon Over Miami** (7-2-0-0—\$98,702) won at the Louisville track on June 20. Longtime Mott assistant **Kenny McCarthy** saddled the winner and accepted the local accolades.

**Tyler Gaffalione** (153-31-34-17—\$1,711,573), 25, reaffirmed his status as one of the sport's escalating young stars by easily defeating 19-time local riding champion **Corey Lanerie** (167-24-18-23—\$1,253,138), 31 wins to 24, in the jockey standings.

Owners **Ken and Sarah Ramsey** (18-5-2-1—\$184,411) earned their record-extending 33<sup>rd</sup> crown as the leading owners at Churchill Downs. On May 24, the Nicholasville, Ky. couple registered their unprecedented 500<sup>th</sup> win beneath the Twin Spires, and finished the season with a total of 504 career Churchill Downs wins.

**Gayle Benson's G M B Racing** (7-2-1-0—\$368,532), the owners of Tom's d'Etat, was the meet's top money-earning owner.

Racing in Kentucky will shift to Ellis Park (July 2-5 and July 17-Aug. 30) and Keeneland (July 8-12) before it returns to Churchill Downs in nine weeks for the rescheduled Kentucky Derby Week (Sept. 1-5). The 146<sup>th</sup> runnings of the Longines Kentucky Oaks (GI) and Kentucky Derby Presented by Woodford Reserve (GI) will be staged with spectators under strict guidelines on Friday, Sept. 4 and Saturday, Sept. 5, respectively.

#### **ABOUT CHURCHILL DOWNS RACETRACK**

Churchill Downs Racetrack ("CDRT"), the world's most legendary racetrack, has been the home of The Kentucky Derby, the longest continually held annual sporting event in the United States, since 1875. Located in Louisville, CDRT features a series of themed race days during Derby Week, including the Kentucky Oaks, and conducts Thoroughbred horse racing during three race meets in the Spring, September, and the Fall. CDRT is located on 175 acres and has a one-mile dirt track, a 7/8-mile turf track, a stabling area, and provides seating for approximately 60,000 guests. The saddling paddock and the stable area has barns sufficient to accommodate 1,400 horses and a 114-room dormitory for backstretch personnel. CDRT also has a year-round simulcast wagering facility. [www.ChurchillDowns.com](http://www.ChurchillDowns.com).